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6 in 10 U.S. adults doubt mental capability of Biden and Trump, AP-NORC poll finds



President Joe Biden delivers his State of the Union speech to a joint session of Congress, at the Capitol in Washington, Feb. 7, 2023.

Associated Press

By JOSH BOAK and AMELIA THOMSON-DEVEAUX

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A poll finds that a significant share of U.S. adults doubt the mental capabilities of 81-year-old President Joe Biden and 77-year-old Donald

Trump, the former president and current Republican front-runner in what could be a rematch of the 2020 election.

More than 6 in 10 (63%) say they're not very or not at all confident in Biden's mental capability to serve effectively as president, turning

his coming State of the Union address into something of a real-time audition for a second term. A similar but slightly smaller share (57%) say that Trump lacks the memory and acuity for the job. The findings from a new survey by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public

Affairs Research point to a tough presidential election in which issues such as age and mental competence could be more prevalent than in any other political contest in modern times.

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LIVE ENTERTAINMENT 7 DAYS A WEEK

SUNDAY:	MONDAY:	TUESDAY:	WEDNESDAY:	THURSDAY:	FRIDAY:	SATURDAY:
MARRYBELL MADURO SINGER 6:30 - 8:30pm	ANGELA FLORES VIOLINIST 6:30 - 8:30pm	JEAN PAUL SAXOPHONIST 6:30 - 8:30pm	EDDIE KROON SINGER 4:00 - 6:00pm MAILLEYN ALVARADO VIOLINIST 6:30 - 8:30pm KARAOKE 9:00 - 11:00pm	MARRYBELL MADURO SINGER 6:30 - 8:30pm	RICKY THOMAS GUITARIST 7:00 - 9:00pm	EDDIE KROON SINGER 4:00 - 6:00pm ANGELA FLORES VIOLINIST 6:30 - 8:30pm


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6 in 10 U.S. adults doubt mental capability of Biden and Trump, AP-NORC poll finds

Continued from Front

People's views of Biden's memory and acuity have soured since January 2022, when about half of those polled expressed similar concerns. (That survey didn't ask a similar question about Trump.)

In a major risk for Biden, independents are much more likely to say that they lack confidence in his mental abilities (80%) compared with Trump's (56%). And Democrats are generally more concerned about Biden's mental capabilities than Republicans are with Trump's, raising the stakes of Biden's upcoming speech to a joint session of Congress on Thursday.

Going into the big event, just 38% of U.S. adults approve of how Biden is handling his job as president, while 61% disapprove. Democrats (74%) are much likelier than independents (20%) and Republicans (6%) to favor his performance. But there's broad discontent on the way Biden is handling a variety of issues, including the economy, immigration and foreign policy. About 4 in 10 Americans approve of the way Biden is handling each of these issues: health care, climate change, abortion policy and the conflict between Russia and Ukraine. But people are less satisfied



In this combination of photos, President Joe Biden, left, speaks on Aug. 10, 2023, in Salt Lake City, and former President Donald Trump speaks on June 13, 2023, in Bedminster, N.J.

Associated Press

by Biden's handling of immigration (29%), the conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians (31%) and the economy (34%) — all of which are likely to come up in the speech before a joint session of Congress.

Nearly 6 in 10 (57%) Americans think the national economy is somewhat or much worse off than before Biden took office in 2021. Only 3 in 10 adults say it's better under his leadership. Still, people are more optimistic about the state of their own bank accounts: 54% say their personal finances are good.

Many respondents to the survey were deeply pessimistic about their likely choices in November because of age and the risk of cognitive decline.

Paul Miller, himself 84, said Biden is just too old — and so is Trump. "He doesn't seem to have the mental whatever to be a president," Miller said of Biden. He added that Trump is "too old, too, and half crazy." The retiree from Carlisle, Pennsylvania, said he voted for Trump in 2020 but he wouldn't do so again.

"I don't think I'm going to vote for either one of them,"

he said. "I hope somebody else is available."

The president faces added pressure about his age after unflattering descriptions of him contained in a special counsel's report that did not recommend criminal prosecution of Biden for his mishandling of classified records, unlike Trump who was indicted for keeping classified material in his Florida home. The report said that Biden's memory was "hazy," "fuzzy," "faulty," "poor" and had "significant limitations."

Biden has tried to deflect concerns by joking about

his age and taking jabs at Trump's own gaffes. Yet the president's age is a liability that has overshadowed his policy achievements on infrastructure, manufacturing and addressing climate change.

About one-third of Democrats said they're not very or not at all confident in Biden's mental capability in the new survey, up from 14% in January 2022. Only 40% of Democrats said they're extremely or very confident in Biden's mental abilities, with approximately 3 in 10 saying they're "somewhat" confident.

Republicans are generally more comfortable with Trump's mental capabilities than Democrats are with Biden's. In the survey, 59% of Republicans are extremely or very confident that Trump has the mental abilities to be president. An additional 20% are somewhat confident, and 20% are not very or not at all confident. But if there is one thing Democrats and Republicans can agree upon, it's that the other party's likely nominee is not mentally up to the task. About 9 in 10 Republicans say Biden lacks the mental capability to serve as president, while a similar share of Democrats say that about Trump. Part of Biden's problem is that his policies have yet to break through the daily clutter of life. □



First lady Jill Biden listens to women discuss their concerns about gun violence, reproductive rights and other topics at Eat restaurant in downtown Las Vegas Saturday, March 2, 2024.

Associated Press

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — First lady Jill Biden hosted a White

House ceremony on Monday for "women of courage" who have fought political

First lady Jill Biden honors 'women of courage' at White House

repression, sexual violence, economic hardship and gender discrimination around the world.

"You've spoken out for yourselves and for others in the face of fear and risk, and those who have tried to steal your voices away," Biden said.

She added, "Change never happens on its own. There is power in this community of women."

Twelve women received the awards, which were distributed by the U.S. Department of

State. It was the 18th year the awards have been given out. Among the honorees were a lawyer from Myanmar, a former political prisoner from Belarus, a disability rights advocate from Afghanistan and a teacher from Ecuador.

One of the honorees, Martha Beatriz Roque Cabello, was not able to attend because she was not allowed to leave her home country of Cuba. She's faced detention and harassment during her decades of advocacy for human rights and political

freedom.

"Marta may not be able to be with us today in person, but we want her to know all of us are with her every single day," said Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

Nine women from Nicaragua were also honored with the Madeleine Albright Honorary Group Award, which is named for the first female U.S. secretary of state. The women were among 222 political prisoners who were released a year ago and they now live in the U.S. □

Wrapping up mission, U.S. troops will leave some longstanding bases in Iraq under new deal

BY QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA
and TARA COPP
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. announced an agreement with the Iraqi government Friday to wrap up the military mission in Iraq of an American-led coalition fighting the Islamic State group by next year, with U.S. troops departing some bases that they have long occupied during a two-decade-long military presence in the country.

But the Biden administration refused to provide details on how many of the approximately 2,500 U.S. troops still serving in Iraq will remain there or acknowledge it will mark a full withdrawal from the country.

"I think it's fair to say that, you know, our footprint is going to be changing within the country," Pentagon deputy press secretary Sabrina Singh told reporters Friday without providing specifics. The announcement comes at a particularly contentious time for the Middle East, with escalating conflict between Israel and two Iranian-backed militant groups Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in Gaza threatening a broader regional war. Bases housing U.S. forces and contractors have been regularly targeted by Iran-backed militias over the last several years, and those attacks intensified late last year and



Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed al-Sudani poses for a photo at the Munich Security Conference in Munich, Germany, Feb. 17, 2024.

early this spring after the Israel-Hamas war broke out nearly a year ago.

For years, Iraqi officials have periodically called for a withdrawal of coalition forces, and formal talks to wind down the U.S. presence in the country have been going on for months. U.S. officials who briefed reporters Friday said the agreement will bring about a two-phase transition in the troops assigned to Iraq that began this month. In the first phase, which runs through September 2025, the coalition mission against ISIS will end and

forces will leave some longstanding bases.

Following the November election, American forces will start departing from Ain al-Asad airbase in western Iraq and from Baghdad International Airport, according to Iraqi government officials who spoke to The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity. Those forces will be moved to Hareer base in Erbil, in northern Iraq's Kurdistan region.

In the second phase, the U.S. will continue to operate in some fashion from Iraq through 2026 to support

counter-ISIS operations in Syria, a senior Biden administration official and a senior defense official said on the condition of anonymity on a call with reporters to provide details ahead of the announcement.

Ultimately, the U.S. military mission would transition to a bilateral security relationship, the U.S. officials said, but they did not indicate what that might mean for the number of American troops who remain in Iraq in the future.

The Iraqi officials said some American troops may stay at Hareer base after 2026

because the Kurdistan regional government would like them to stay.

"We have taken an important step in resolving the issue of the international coalition to fight ISIS," Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed al-Sudani said in a speech this month. He noted "the government's belief in the capabilities of our security forces that defeated the remnants of ISIS."

The continued presence of U.S. troops has been a political vulnerability for Sudani, whose government is under increased influence from Iran. Iraq has long struggled to balance its ties with the U.S. and Iran, both allies of the Iraqi government but regional archenemies.

"We thank the government for its position to expel the international coalition forces," Qais Khazali, founder of Asaib Ahl al-Haq an Iran-backed Iraqi Shia militia that has conducted attacks against U.S. forces in Iraq said last week.

The agreement marks the third time in the last two decades that the U.S. has announced a formal transition of the military's role there. The U.S. invaded Iraq in March 2003 in what it called a massive "shock and awe" bombing campaign that lit up the skies, laid waste to large sections of the country and paved the way for American ground troops to converge on Baghdad. □

Associated Press

Supreme Court refuses to order New York to include RFK Jr. on the presidential ballot

By MARK SHERMAN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court on Friday refused an emergency appeal from Robert F. Kennedy Jr.'s presidential campaign seeking to have his name added to New York's ballot.

Kennedy has been trying to get his name off ballots in key battleground states since he suspended his campaign in August and endorsed former President Donald Trump. But he has simultaneously tried to stay on the ballot in states like New York where his presence is unlikely to make a difference in the battle between Trump and Vice President Kamala Harris. The justices did

not comment in rejecting the emergency appeal. There were no noted dissents.

New York courts had previously ruled that Kennedy falsely claimed to live in New York on his nominating petitions, despite actually living in California.

The federal appeals court in New York refused to issue an emergency order to add Kennedy's name to the ballot.

The state told the high court that the request came too close to the election, after tens of thousands of ballots already had been mailed.

Noting that Kennedy has suspended his campaign, the state said voters still could write in his name if they wish. □



Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., speaks before Republican presidential nominee former President Donald Trump at a campaign event, Friday, Sept. 27, 2024 in Walker, Mich.

Associated Press

Officials warn that EVs could catch fire if inundated with saltwater from Hurricane Helene

By **JOSH FUNK**
Associated Press

Electric vehicles can catch fire if they are inundated by saltwater, so owners who live in the path of a major storm like Hurricane Helene should take precautions and prepare for the possibility that they'll be unable to charge their cars during a power outage. What can EV owners do? Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis urged EV owners this week to get their vehicles to higher ground before Hurricane Helene arrived. Although the problem is rare, there have been a number of instances in recent years of electric vehicles igniting after hurricanes. Keeping electric vehicles out of standing water is the best way to avoid the possibility of a fire. Tesla offers similar advice about avoiding letting its vehicles become submerged if at all possible, but if that does happen the carmaker suggests towing the vehicle at least 50 feet away from structures or anything combustible until it can be inspected by a



A partially submerged vehicle sits in flood water from after Hurricane Helene passed the area, Friday, Sept 27, 2024, in Atlanta.

Associated Press

mechanic. The best way to get through a power outage is to follow the same kind of advice your dad may have given you about keeping your gas tank full to make sure you wouldn't be stranded. Keeping your electric vehicle charged offers the most flexibility.

Of course, electric vehicle owners won't be able to charge their cars during a power outage, so they may need to watch how much they drive. But EVs aren't any worse off than conventional vehicles because gas stations can't pump fuel in a power outage either.

How common are EV fires after flooding? The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has been researching this problem since it was first seen after Hurricane Sandy struck the Northeast in 2012. But no one seems to have detailed statistics on just how often this happens.

Two years ago, Hurricane Ian compromised the batteries of as many as 5,000 electric vehicles, and 36 of them caught fire. Several more electric vehicles caught fire in Florida last year after Hurricane Idalia, although that storm was weaker than Ian. Researchers at NHTSA speculated that it may have also helped that more people were aware of the problem and moved their vehicles to higher ground before that storm. But it happens often enough that Florida officials were worried about the possibility before Hurricane Helene arrived because they were expecting a potentially devastating storm surge up to 20 feet deep in the northwestern part of Florida. These fires do seem to be linked specifically to saltwater because salt can conduct electricity. Similar problems haven't been reported after freshwater flooding in California that was driven by heavy rains early this year.

New law requires California schools to teach about historical mistreatment of Native Americans

By **SOPHIE AUSTIN**
Associated Press/Report for America

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — For Johnny Hernandez Jr., vice chairman of the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians in Southern California, it was difficult as a kid growing up around San Bernardino to hear two different accounts of the histories of Indigenous peoples in the state. One account came from his elders and was based on their lived experiences, and another came from his teachers at school and glossed over decades of mistreatment Native American people faced. "You have your family, but then you have the people you're supposed to respect teachers and the administration," he said. "As a kid

I'll speak for myself it is confusing to ... know who's telling the truth." Now a bill signed into law by Democratic Gov. Gavin

Newsom on Friday requires public schools teaching elementary, middle or high school students about Spanish colonization and

the California gold rush to include instruction on the mistreatment and contributions of Native Americans during during those periods. The state Department of Education must consult with tribes when it updates its history and social studies curriculum framework after Jan. 1, 2025, under the law. "This is a critical step to right some of the educational wrongs," Hernandez said before the bill was signed. Newsom signed the measure Friday on California Native American Day, a holiday first designated in the 1990s to honor the culture and history of Indigenous peoples in the state. California is home to 109 federally recognized Indigenous tribes, the second-most in the nation behind

Alaska. "I'm proud of the progress California has made to reckon with the dark chapters of our past, and we're committed to continuing this important work to promote equity, inclusion and accountability for Native peoples," Newsom said in statement. "As we celebrate the many tribal communities in California today, we recommit to working with tribal partners to better address their unique needs and strengthen California for all." Newsom, who issued a state apology in 2019 for the historical violence against and mistreatment of Native Americans, also signed another 10 measures Friday to further support tribal needs.



Some of the 300 fourth-grade students and teachers from Inland Empire schools learn a traditional Native American song in a pre-celebration of the anticipated passage of Assembly Bill 1821 at the California Indian Cultural Awareness Conference (CICAC) at the California State University campus in San Bernardino, Calif., on Monday, Sept. 23, 2024.

Associated Press

Strikes along Israel-Lebanon border kill 4 people as US envoy visits Beirut to press a cease-fire

By **BASSEM MROUE** and **MELANIE LIDMAN**
Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — An Israeli air-strike in southern Lebanon killed three paramedics from the militant group Hezbollah on Monday, state media said, hours after a missile strike blamed on the militants killed at least one foreign worker in northern Israel.

The deadly violence Monday came as a senior U.S. envoy visited Beirut and warned that a Gaza truce wouldn't necessarily apply to conflict along the Lebanon-Israel border. Amos Hochstein urged the parties to reach a lasting cease-fire at the border following meetings Monday with Lebanese leaders.

His comments came hours after the deputy leader of Lebanon's militant group Hamas, Naim Kassem, said the only way to restore calm along the border is to end the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip.

Since the Israel-Hamas war started, Hezbollah has been exchanging fire with Israel almost daily, displacing thousands of people and spiking fear that the conflict may spread through the region. In northern Israel, 60,000 people have evacuated, the Israeli government says.

"People won't come back anytime soon, they're



Israeli security forces in Kiryat Shoma, northern Israel, evacuate a wounded Thai man after he was hit by an anti-tank missile fired from Lebanon, in a nearby village on Monday, March 4, 2024. Associated Press

scared, it's dangerous," Haim Menus, 70, said Monday while buying hardware at one of the rare stores open in the nearly abandoned northern Israeli town of Kiryat Shmona. He is one of the few who have remained, working curtailed hours at a bakery.

"An anti-tank missile could come at any time," Menus said.

Moments later, an anti-tank missile struck a field in the nearby community of Margaliot as sirens blared, killing one Indian worker and injuring seven other foreign

workers from India and Thailand, according the Israel Rescue Services and the Israeli army. Paramedics evacuated the injured — two of them in serious condition — to hospitals via ambulance and helicopter.

The Israeli military said they struck the source of the launches as well as additional Hezbollah military infrastructure in southern Lebanon.

In Lebanon, the state-run National News Agency said that one of the Israeli airstrikes killed three para-

medics with Hezbollah's Islamic Health Society in the border village of Oddaiseh. Meanwhile, Hezbollah said its fighters aborted two infiltration attempts the night before by Israeli troops into a border area in southern Lebanon. It also said that its fighters carried out three attacks targeting Israeli posts along the border.

In Beirut, Hochstein, a senior adviser to U.S. President Joe Biden, began his talks by meeting Lebanon's Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri, a Hezbollah ally. He later met with caretaker

Prime Minister Najib Mikati and the army commander, Gen. Joseph Aoun.

"The United States remains committed to advancing lasting security solutions achieved through diplomatic process," Hochstein told reporters after he met Berri. He said such a move would allow tens of thousands of Lebanese and Israelis who were displaced by the conflict "to safely return" to their homes.

Hochstein's visit came as the U.S., Qatar and Egypt have been trying for weeks to broker a cease-fire between Israel and Hamas and to convince the Palestinian militant group to release some of the scores of hostages it is still holding since the Oct. 7 attack that sparked the war.

Since the Israel-Hamas war began, more than 215 Hezbollah fighters and nearly 40 civilians were killed on the Lebanese side while in Israel, nine soldiers and 10 civilians were left dead in the attacks.

"I'm mindful that my arrival comes on the heels of a tense few weeks on both sides of the border," Hochstein said. "An escalation will certainly not help Lebanon rebuild and advance forward at this critical time in Lebanon's history," he added in an apparent reference to Lebanon's economic crisis since 2019. □

3 men suspected in the disappearance of a U.S. sailing couple ordered deported from St. Vincent

KINGSTOWN, St. Vincent (AP) — Three men from Grenada suspected in the disappearance of a U.S. couple whose catamaran was hijacked were ordered deported from St. Vincent on Monday.

The men, Trevon Robertson, a 19-year-old unemployed man; Abita Stanislaus, a 25-year-old farmer and Ron Mitchell, a 30-year-old sailor, had pleaded guilty to immigration charges in a court in the eastern Carib-

bean island of St. Vincent. Senior Magistrate Colin John ordered that they be repatriated "as soon as practicable."

The men had escaped from a police holding cell in Grenada on Feb. 18 and are suspected of hijacking the catamaran while Ralph Hendry and Kathy Brandel were aboard.

Police have said they believe the couple were thrown overboard as the suspects sailed to St. Vin-

cent, where they were arrested on Feb. 21. They have not been charged in the case.

The investigation is ongoing, with authorities noting there were signs of violence aboard the couple's boat found abandoned in St. Vincent.

The nonprofit Salty Dawg Sailing Association described Hendry and Brandel as "veteran cruisers" who participated in last year's Caribbean Rally from



Police transport escaped prisoners Atiba Stanislaus, far left, and Trevon Robertson who are handcuffed together in Kingstown, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Monday, March 4, 2024. Associated Press

Hampton, Virginia, to Antigua, and had planned to

spend the winter cruising in the eastern Caribbean. □

Myanmar's opposition rejects a military appeal for talks on a political solution to armed conflict

By GRANT PECK

Associated Press

BANGKOK (AP) — The main group coordinating opposition to military rule in Myanmar rejected on Friday a surprise offer from the ruling generals to hold talks on a political solution to the country's nationwide armed conflict.

Nay Phone Latt, a spokesperson for the opposition's shadow National Unity Government, told The Associated Press that a joint statement issued earlier this year by opposition groups has already paved the way for a negotiated political solution if the army agrees to its conditions.

Padoh Saw Kalae Say, a spokesperson of the Karen National Union, which represents the Karen ethnic minority, said it also will not accept the military's offer. The KNU has been fighting on and off for greater autonomy since Myanmar, then called Burma, won independence from Britain in 1948.

"What we see is that their inviting offers are the ideas from more than 70 years ago. We won't accept and discuss it, and looking back at the statements we have repeatedly expressed, I would like to say that there



Saw Win Myint, a commander of a military unit under the Karen National Union, the leading political body for the Karen ethnic minority that is part of the resistance against military rule in Myanmar, inspects the damaged armory in the captured army base of Infantry Battalion 275 in Myawaddy township in Kayin state, Myanmar, on April 12, 2024.

Associated Press

is no need to think about this," Padoh Saw Kalae Say told the AP.

The military's brief "Offer to resolve political issues in political means," dated Thursday and published Friday in the Global New Light of Myanmar and other state-run newspapers, was its most direct offer of peace talks since it seized power from the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi in February 2021.

It said its opponents are invited "to contact the State

to resolve the political issues through party politics or electoral processes in order to be able to join hands with the people to emphasize durable peace and development by discarding the armed terrorist way."

The offer came five days before the military government launches a national census to compile voter lists for a general election expected next year. An election is seen as a way for the military to legitimize its rule,

though it would be difficult to organize while the country is at war, and critics see no way for the polls to be free and fair. The ruling military originally announced that elections would be held in August 2023, but has repeatedly pushed back the date.

The military's offer, which defended its 2021 takeover and blamed the country's subsequent turmoil on its opponents, came after the army over the past year has suffered unprecedented

ed battlefield defeats from powerful ethnic militias, especially in the northeast along the border with China and in the western state of Rakhine.

The army is currently on the defensive against ethnic militias in much of the country that are seeking autonomy, as well as hundreds of armed guerrilla groups collectively called People's Defense Forces, formed to fight to restore democracy after the army takeover. The opposition's political road map earlier this year offering talks was signed by the National Unity Government and three major ethnic armed organizations: the Chin National Front, the Karenni National Progressive Party and the Karen National Union, all of which are engaged in active combat against the military government.

That statement's objectives include terminating the military's involvement in politics, placing all armed forces under the command of an elected civilian government, promulgating a new constitution embodying federalism and democratic values, establishing a new federal democratic union and instituting a system of transitional justice. □

Rwanda's army and an armed group shelled displaced people camps in Congo, rights group says

By JEAN-YVES KAMALE AND WILSON MCMAKIN

Associated Press

KINSHASA, Congo (AP) — Rwanda's army and a militia it backs shelled camps for displaced people in eastern Congo, Human Rights Watch said. It also accused Congo of abuses against civilians.

A report by the group released Thursday said that since the beginning of the year, Rwanda's army and the M23 rebel armed group, which it supports, have "indiscriminately" shelled camps in eastern Congo where tens of thousands of people are sheltering. Congo's army, mean-

while, has put displaced people at increased risk by deploying artillery near the

camps, the report said. Both sides have killed camp residents, committed rapes



M23 rebels stand with their weapons in Kibumba, in the eastern of Democratic Republic of Congo, Dec. 23, 2022.

Associated Press

and obstructed aid, it said. Eastern Congo has struggled with armed violence as more than 120 armed groups fight for power, land and valuable mineral resources while others try to defend their communities. Some armed groups have been accused of mass killings, rapes and other human rights violations. The violence has displaced some 6 million people in the east.

The March 23 Movement, or M23, is a rebel military group mainly made up of ethnic Tutsis that broke away from the Congolese army just over a decade ago. They staged a large

offensive in 2012 and took over the provincial capital of Goma near the border with Rwanda, the same city they are threatening again.

Congo alleges that Rwandan forces have been involved in aggression and war crimes in the east and U.S. and U.N. experts accuse it of giving military backing to M23. Rwanda denies the claim, but in February admitted that it has troops and missile systems in eastern Congo to safeguard its security, pointing to a buildup of Congolese forces near the border. □

Food culture in Aruba

(Oranjestad) - Like many other cultures, an important aspect of the Aruban cultural identity is our connection to food and food traditions. The local food traditions consist of a melting pot of different cultural and religious eating habits and dishes.

Breakfast, lunch and dinner

The routine of breakfast, lunch and dinner on the island is one that does not completely follow a European or American routine, despite the major influences from these parts of the world on our culture and way of living. When it comes to the three important meals of the day, most of the Aruban population follows a Latin-American influenced routine.

Breakfast

Breakfast in Aruba is quite simple: a cup of coffee or tea, some bread, and sometimes an egg. Sometimes, due to the need of a quick "to-go" breakfast, you may also find many snack trucks and cafes that sell sandwiches, pastechis

(meat pie), arepas and empanadas early in the morning.

Main Meal

The main meal is typically eaten in most households around noon or in the afternoon. This can consist of meat, fish, and chicken—stewed or fried—with funchi (polenta) or rice with stewed vegetables. Often, fried or boiled plantain or pan bati (Aruban pancake) is included. Stews are a staple in Aruban cuisine and can be largely influenced by Latin-American and Latin/Afro-Caribbean Stews. Some of the more unique stews and soups from the ABC Islands* include sopi di bonchi cora (red kidney bean soup with pig tail), sopi mondongo (tripe soup), carni stoba (beef stew), comcomber stoba (West Indian gherkin stew) and much more.

Dinner Time

Dinner time can vary significantly from household to household. Unlike the U.S. or in Europe, dinner time typically does not consist of



a whole (warm) meal. Instead, the evening "meal" can typically consist of something lighter, like a sandwich, though it is not uncommon to see leftovers from the main meal reheated and eaten again. Tea and coffee are often also served with the evening snack.

(Religious) Holidays

Christmas is probably the biggest global holiday, and every culture has its own spin on what their Christmas cuisine entails. In Aruba, our Christmas cuisine is again largely based on Latin-American influences, most notably from Venezuela. Ayacas and the famous pan di ham* are two crucial holiday dishes, along with stuffed turkey, roasted glazed ham topped with pineapples, arroz con pollo (rice and chicken) and potato salad, among other items. Traditional drinks include ponche crema (Aruban eggnog), chuculati pinda (hot chocolate with peanut butter), and homemade fruit punch. Desserts include, bolo di pistachio (pistachio cake), bolo di cashupete (cashew cake), quesillo (flan), bolo preto (dark fruit cake), drigidek (gingerbread), pan boyo (bread cake) and more.

Snacks and tasty delights

Besides meals and dishes that are eaten on the dinner table, Aruba also has a food tradition that includes snacks and other tasty delights that you may easily find around the island. These include, Saco*, basket, pastechi, kroket, deditos, Johnny cake and more. These snacks are usually sold at local snack trucks and cafes, often located on the side of the road. In the area of Tanki Leendert and Tanki flip, for example, there are many of these trucks parked on the side of the road and often open until late at night—offering tasty and filling snacks post night-life fun. □

*ABC Islands: Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao

*Pan di ham: Derived from the Venezuelan Pan de Jamon (rolled up bread with ham, raisins and olives)

*Saco: Saco literally means "bag". Saco contains fried potatoes, plantains, chicken (and ribs) and a Johnny cake, served in a paper bag.

Source: Voeding, voedingsgewoonten en gerechten op Aruba (Nutrition, Food Traditions and Dishes on Aruba) by Biblioteca Nacional Aruba

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The Brownstone Ribs and Seafood | The Market | M8 Boutique
Fusion - Piano & Wine Bar | Shalom Body & Soul Spa | Treasure Cove
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Happiness starts with a delectable breakfast at Paseo Herencia

ORANJESTAD – Want to make your morning a little brighter and enjoyable? Start your day with a luscious cup of coffee and unique and local flavors at Paseo Herencia!

Che Bar

Opening at 7:30am, Che Bar offers a variety of coffee including Lavazza and Nespresso, juice, and delicious breakfast items like bagels, eggs and sandwiches. However, they are famous for their delicious and authentic empanadas! The dough is brought all the way from Argentina, so you are getting the characteristic flavor of a traditional empanada. These savory, crispy pastries come with different fillings

like chicken, egg, bacon and cheese, or beef. We can guarantee they will leave you wanting more. If you're craving something sweet, you can opt for a waffle, as they come in delicious and surprising flavors like banana con dulce de leche and s'mores!

Che Bar recently changed their concept and now has indoor tables with air conditioning, and an outdoor bar for al fresco drinks. They are also introducing a tapas concept soon, to delight your taste buds with different and fascinating flavors. And if you're looking for a great deal, Che Bar has a Happy Hour from 5pm to 11pm which includes cocktails, shots, Aruban beer



is ecologically conscious, and try to minimize food waste by providing sensible, yet indulgent portions.

Paseo Herencia offers free parking in the morning until noon, and is located close to the hotel areas, making it easily accessible and a walk away from the nearest beach!

Start your day with a luxurious experience by having a delectable breakfast at Paseo Herencia. □



and for those looking for something special, Argentinian wines!

Drunk's Denial

Drunk's Denial is a quaint gourmet café, with a twist. Here you can have exquisite gourmet food infused with a touch of alcohol! We tasted the espresso with amaretto, a rich combination of flavors with subtle hints that delight the senses. This café is owned by an Aruban, and each dish was originally created by the owners inspired on gourmet flavors, and you won't find any of their recipes anywhere else.

Drunk's Denial offers breakfast starting at 8am, so you can stop by for Dutch pancakes or crêpes. Tessa Pietersz, owner of Drunk's Denial, explained that

the difference between a crêpe and a Dutch pancake is that the crêpes are thinner and folded, while the Dutch pancake uses the same amount of batter but makes a thicker pancake. For both of these you can choose to have your toppings be infused with alcohol – you can choose between fresh or drunken fruits. For example, you can have a delicious rum raisin crêpe with the raisins infused with the rum, and a scoop of ice cream to sweeten your day.

They also offer waffles, yoghurt bowls, eggs and more! And don't miss their succulent and fresh alcohol-infused cakes.

Pietersz also explained that sustainability is important to them, and Drunk's Denial

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Celebrate National Hymn & Flag Day with the locals Check out the Aruban seal light display at Cas di Luz in San Nicolas!

(Oranjestad)—The organization Casita di Luz has just announced that they are having a light display shown of the Aruban Seal at Cas di Luz in San Nicolas in celebration of the National Hymn & Flag Day.

The light display will be turned on everyday for all to enjoy! From Sunday to Thursday, the display will be on from 6:30 pm to 11 pm. From Friday and Saturday it will be on from 6:30 pm to 12 am. This piece was constructed and designed by Nino Kock along with several helpers that have contributed to this beautiful, bright display. Don't miss out on one of the most special holiday for the Aruban culture; stay tuned for more information on activities to come!

Photo credit goes to Casita di Luz on Facebook.

A guide for the perfect picture

Where to find the most Instagrammable places in Oranjestad

(Oranjestad)—Imagine, you're taking a stroll in the city center, and you want to take the most picture-perfect photo to show your friends and family back home and online. It seems like the perfect spot can be hard to find, but Oranjestad is full of great spots for a quick snapshot! Here are the most Instagrammable places in Oranjestad.

"I LOVE ARUBA"



Right on Paardenbaai Plaza, near the harbor entrance, you will spot a giant sign that reads "I LOVE ARUBA". A great first stop for a quick shot with the family, this spot is among the few that has become a favorite among tourists, especially those that are visiting Aruba

through a cruise vacation.

Speaking of giant signs that read "Aruba" (because there can never be too many), there is another sign you can find along the Linear Park, in front of Talk of the Town Hotel. It may be a long walk from the harbor to get there, but while you're at it, check out these other spots along the way!

The sitting bull



Yes, you read that right; right in the heart of the city center, in front of the Crystal Casino in the Renaissance Mall, there is a black bull sitting on a bench, waiting for you



to take a picture with it. Ok, so it's not a real bull, but "I took a picture with a sitting bull" sounds like a great conversation opener.

See if you can also spot the cow on the roof!

Wooden Swing on Plaza Daniel Leo

While you're in front of the Renaissance Mall, check out the wooden swing on the other side of the mall on Plaza Daniel Leo. Another favorite among visitors wanting a cute

snapshot for Instagram. Just pass through the Renaissance Mall and find this gem in front of the back entrance!

Since you've made it this far, one question: How many blue horses have you spotted already?

Renaissance Dock

Last but certainly not least, the Renaissance Dock is the perfect spot to take a beautiful picture, especially at sunset. The dock is located behind the Renaissance Market Place, and runs from the Renaissance Marina up to Renaissance Beach and Wilhelmina Park. This spot offers a gorgeous view of the ocean and sunset, accompanied by the soft waves crashing on the shoreline. You may even spot some iguanas! □



Aruba to me

ORANJESTAD — You are back and we would like to portrait you! By inviting you to send us your favorite vacation picture while enjoying our Happy Island.

Complete the sentence: Aruba to me is Send your picture with that text (including your name and where you are from) to: news@arubatoday.com and we will publish your vacation memory. Isn't that a special way to keep your best moments alive? Please do note: By submitting photos, text or any other materials, you give permission to The Aruba Today Newspaper, Caribbean Speed Printers and any of its affiliated companies to use said materials, as well as names, likeness, etc. for promotional purposes with-

out compensation.

Last but not least: check out our website, Instagram and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again.

For today we received a lovely message from our awesome visitor, Karalyn from New Jersey, USA.

She wrote to us saying: "“Aruba to me is making connections and living dreams. We met so many people with great stories and happy vibes. Thank you for a wonderful stay!”"

Thank you for sending us this wonderful message sharing what Aruba means to you with us and our readers! □



Create museum memories

ORANJESTAD — Museums are an integral part of conserving and honoring cultures, and Aruba is no exception. Our Island has a wide selection of various museums for our locals and visitors to see. Take this opportunity to learn about our island and experience a different day beyond the beach. Let us introduce to you these museums.

Museum of Industry Aruba

The Museum of Industry is located in San Nicolas—better known as the art capital of Aruba. This museum exhibits the industrial history of gold, aloe, phosphate, oil and tourism through elaborated displays and multimedia installations. The Museum of Industry is situated in the Water Tower in San Nicolas and narrates Aruba's industrial history, which began in the 19th century. The Water Tower was built in 1939 and consists of three sections: the substructure, the high-rising vertical shaft, and the tank at the top. The Water Tower was purchased by the Monuments Fund in 2003 so

it can be restored and preserved as one of Aruba's monuments. The Museum of Industry is part of Aruba Museum Foundation (Fundacion Museo Aruban), which is a foundation set to maintain, preserve, and protect the Aruban cultural sector, history, and nature. The museum of Industry is open daily from 9 am till 6 pm.

For more information, check out their Facebook page Museum of Industry Aruba.

Archaeological Museum of Aruba

The Archaeological Museum of Aruba is located at Schelpstraat 42 in downtown Oranjestad. The renovated historic Ecury complex in the area has been transformed from a family home to a modern museum that preserves Aruba's Amerindian cultural heritage. This 21st century museum is especially designed to preserve valuable artifacts dating back to the Pre-Ceramic period of 2500 BC.

In the late 1980's, AMA identified its



need for an adequate housing for its collection and activities. After studying various options, a project proposal was drawn up, including the acquisition and restoration of historical buildings in downtown Oranjestad.

These historical buildings were formerly the property of the Ecury family. The "Ecury Complex", is a cluster of single and two-story historic buildings, mainly Dutch colonial architecture from the late 19th and 20th century on a plot of approximately 1.700 m2.

In 1997, the Aruban Government bought the complex for the National Archaeological Museum project. In 2004, a financial agreement was signed with the European Development Fund and in 2006, restoration and construction work began on the monumental buildings and the soon-to-be exhibition space. In December 2007, the key to the complex was delivered and the museum's employees moved to the new location. The final de-

sign for the exhibit was completed in November 2007 and the permanent exhibit, financed by the Aruban Government and the Union of Cultural Organizations (UNOCA), opened in July 2009.

At the new location, the National Archaeological Museum Aruba disposes of approximately 500 m2 for its permanent exhibit. This exhibit conveys information on the origin and culture of the first inhabitants of the island through archaeological objects and modern exhibition techniques. The new permanent exhibit gives the visitor an insight into the cultures that inhabited the island in Pre-Historical and Early Historical times. The museum also hosts attractive public programs, including lectures, educational projects, temporary exhibits and workshops.

The museum is open daily from 9:30 am till 4:30 pm. For more information check out the Facebook page Museo Arqueologico Nacional Aruba. □



Aruba's underwater wonderland

ORANJESTAD - Exploring the underwater wonders is something you should definitely do during your stay in Aruba. The underwater world has everything to offer that makes a snorkel trip so exceptional; an impressive, colorful sea life with exotic fishes, turtles and beautiful coral reef. The historic shipwrecks, located on the Aruban seabed are also worth a visit. Aruba is known for its white beaches and blue oceans, which means there are many fascinating under water spots, where you can take your snorkeling gear and we selected the top spots for you.



Tres Trapi

Tres Trapi means tree steps in Papiamentu, Papiamentu is together with Dutch the official language spoken on Aruba. The beach is called Tres Trapi because it is accessible by the tree steps carved into the rocks. Tres Trapi is a small rocky beach, located on the north-western side of the island, approximately 5 to 10 minute drive from Palm Beach. From the unique steps you can easily walk over the beach into the clear and turquoise blue ocean. While snorkeling you will encounter all kind of tropical fishes and sea stars. The kind of starfish you will find in the Aruban waters is the red cushion sea star. This is a starfish that is commonly found in the shallow waters of the Caribbean sea and if you are lucky during your snorkeling visit to Tres Trapi, you may come across one of the green sea turtles. Respect the animal, keep your distance and enjoy the view. Also remember; it is a once in a life time experience.



Antilla shipwreck

Antilla is a 400-foot-long long ship, built in 1939 in Hamburg, Germany. Antilla came to Aruba, because it had to find a neutral port. When Germany invaded the Netherlands on May 10, 1940, the crew decided to let

their own ship sink, to prevent it from falling into the hands of the Dutch Navy. Antilla lies on its portside in Malmok bay, and the sunken world war two ship is now one of Aruba's most popular snorkeling and dive spots. However, the ship wreck can only be reached by boat. The ship is visible from the surface and during your snorkeling trip you be surrounded by hundreds of tropical fishes, but the ship wreck alone is already impressive enough.



Baby Beach

Baby beach; a white beach, with a crystal blue ocean. The beach is located on the southern part of the island. On the way to the famous beach, you will drive through the old capital of Aruba, San Nicolas. The old Aruban culture can be still felt and experienced here, so do not hesitate to get out of your car and walk around for a while. Baby beach is a child friendly beach, since it is shallow and the water has a pleasant temperature. The name therefore fits well with the beach. Baby beach is an excellent beach for snorkeling, especially if you want to go with small children, because the water remains shallow and there are still many underwater wonders to see. In the ocean there is an area marked until where it is recommended to snorkel and on the beach you will find different facilities. It is a perfect beach to spend your day snorkeling and relaxing.



Mangel Halto

Mangel Halto beach is located in Savaneta, on the southern-west part of the island. The beach is different from the other beaches in Aruba; it is beach full of mangroves. You reach the beach by a bridge through the mangroves and then you will have several entrances to the sea. There are diverse spots where you can enjoy a perfect beach day, wooden stairs made to enter the water and a dock to sit on and enjoy the view. Mangel Halto is also worth a visit for the snorkeling experience. Inside the bay, the water is clear and you find many colorful fish. Outside the bay is a bit more challenging for beginners because of the wind and the waves, but the coral is alive and it is just like snorkel heaven. □

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 1 Algiers section
- 7 Pull along
- 11 Each
- 12 Franc's replacement
- 13 Beatrix Potter character
- 15 Leg bone
- 16 Panning find
- 18 Sirius, for one
- 21 Painter Magritte
- 22 Shrewd
- 24 Have something
- 25 Fish eggs
- 26 Sense of self
- 27 Knight's foe
- 29 Londoner, e.g.
- 30 Set eyes on
- 31 Night fliers
- 32 One a-courting
- 34 Animated film character
- 40 Bad time for Caesar
- 41 "That's it!"
- 42 Borscht veggie
- 43 Declared

DOWN

- 1 Beanie or beret
- 2 Galoot
- 3 Use the couch
- 4 Scarab or ladybug
- 5 Tart
- 6 Thyme or tarragon
- 7 Campaign event
- 8 Massage
- 9 Onassis nickname
- 10 Received
- 14 Usher's place
- 16 Bike parts
- 17 Like draft beer
- 19 Turn away
- 20 TV's Philbin
- 21 Carmine
- 22 Take in
- 23 Turn bad
- 25 Copter part
- 28 Advice to a young man
- 29 Singer Streisand
- 31 Hum-dinger
- 33 Metal sources
- 34 Vault part
- 35 Praiseful poem
- 36 "My word!"
- 37 Wager
- 38 Presidential nickname
- 39 Small bit

C	O	S	M	O		D	O	R	I	S
B	R	O	O	K		R	I	A	T	A
S	A	N	T	A		E	L	F	I	N
			O	P	E	D		T	S	K
S	P	Y	R	I	N	G	S			
A	R	A	B		D	E	T	A	I	L
P	I	L	O	T		R	E	T	R	O
S	M	E	A	R	S		A	T	O	P
		T	A	C	O	M	A	N	S	
R	A	P		W	I	N	S			
U	S	U	A	L		C	H	U	T	E
S	I	N	C	E		L	I	K	E	S
T	A	T	E	R		E	P	E	E	S

Yesterday's answer

1	2	3	4	5	6		7	8	9	10
11							12			
13							14			
			15							
	16	17					18		19	20
21						22				23
24				25				26		
27			28				29			
	30						31			
			32		33					
34	35	36						37	38	39
40						41				
42						43				

3-5

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

3-5 CRYPTOQUOTE

YGUX UX YGA OAFMWVA NM

VLFEG: FLUD, CNLV,

MALYGAFX, VUDY. — CUXL

HCAKOLX

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: OUT OF A MISTY DREAM, OUR PATH EMERGES FOR A WHILE, THEN CLOSES WITHIN A DREAM. — ERNEST DOWSON

Cruise ship Schedule: October 01 - 13 2024

			ARR	DEPT	BERTH		
TUE	01	CARNIVAL HORIZON	09.00	22.00	C	1	
		FREEWINDS	06.00	****	E	1	
WED	02	RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS	09.00	21.00	C	1	
THU	03	WORLD EXPLORER	08.00	23.59	C	1	
SUN	06	FREEWINDS - DEPT.	****	22.15	E	-	
TUE	08	CELEBRITY BEYOND	08.00	21.00	B	1	
		CARNIVAL VISTA	13.00	23.00	I	1	
		FREEWINDS	06.00	****	E	1	
SUN	13	FREEWINDS - DEPT.	****	22.15	E	-	

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basicbut important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.

lets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.

Supermarket hours



Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.

Electrical power



Drinking water



The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.

Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of out-

Safety



Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

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24/7

U.S. suicides held steady in 2023 at a very high level



Delaware Gov. John Carney speaks at an Amtrak facility in Bear, Del., Monday, Nov. 6, 2023.

Associated Press

By MIKE STOBBE
AP Medical Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — U.S. suicides last year remained at about the highest level in the nation's history, preliminary data suggests.

A little over 49,300 suicide deaths were reported in 2023, according to provisional data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. That number that could grow a little as some death investigations are wrapped up and reported.

Just under 49,500 were reported in 2022, according to final data released Thursday. The numbers are close enough that the suicide rate for the two years are the same, CDC officials said.

U.S. suicide rates have been rising for nearly 20 years, aside from a two-year drop around the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. So "a leveling off of any increase in suicide is cautiously promising news," said Katherine Keyes, a Columbia University public health professor who studies suicide.

Indeed, there's reason for optimism. A 2-year-old national crisis line allows anyone in the U.S. to dial 988 to reach mental health specialists. That and other efforts may be starting to pay off, Keyes said, but it "really remains to be seen."

Experts caution that suicide the nation's 11th leading cause of death in 2022 is complicated

and that attempts can be driven by a range of factors. Contributors include higher rates of depression, limited availability of mental health services, and the availability of guns. About 55% of all suicide deaths in 2022 involved firearms, according to CDC data. The CDC's Thursday report said:

Suicide was the second leading cause of death for people ages 10–14 and 20–34, and the third leading cause for people ages 15–19.

Deaths continue to be more common among boys and men than girls and women. The highest suicide rate for any group by far was in men ages 75 and older, at about 44 suicides per 100,000 men that age.

Among women, the highest rate was in those who were middle-aged, about 9 per 100,000. But more dramatic increases have

been seen in teens and young women, with the rate for that group doubling in the last two decades.

The overall suicide rate in 2022 and 2023 was 14.2 per 100,000. It also was that high in 2018. Before then, it hadn't been that high since 1941. □



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2 Bed Garden view \$16,500
3 Bed Ocean view \$32,000
WK 51 Ocean view \$65,000
WK 52 Ocean View \$65,000
WK 7 and 14 - all views

GOLD SEASON

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2 Bed Oceanside \$14,000
2 Bed Ocean view \$12,500
2 Bed Garden view \$10,000
3 Bed Ocean view \$28,000

Marriott Aruba Ocean Club PLATINUM SEASON

2 Bed Oceanfront \$45,000
2 Bed Ocean view \$29,000
1 Bed Ocean front \$21,000
1 Bed Ocean View \$17,000

GOLD SEASON

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2 Bed Ocean view \$15,000
1 Bed Oceanfront \$13,000
1 Bed Ocean View \$11,500

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San Nicolas

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PHARMACY ON DUTY

Oranjestad:
del Pueblo : Tel. 582 1253
San Nicolas:
Centro Medico: Tel. 584 5794

OTHER

Dental Clinic 587 9850
Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002
Urgent Care 586 0448
Walk-In Doctor's Clinic
+297 588 0539

EMERGENCY

Police	100
Oranjestad	527 3140
Noord	527 3200
Sta. Cruz	527 2900
San Nicolas	584 5000
Police Tipline	11141
Ambulancia	911
Fire Dept.	115
Red Cross	582 2219

TAXI SERVICES

Taxi Tas	587 5900
Prof. Taxi	588 0035
Taxi D.T.S.	587 2300
Taxi Serv. Aruba	583 3232
A1 Taxi Serv.	280 2828

TRAVEL INFO

Aruba Airport	524 2424
American Airlines	582 2700
Avianca	588 0059
Jet Blue	588 2244
Surinam	582 7896

AID FOUNDATIONS

Aruba Food Bank
Tel. 588 0002
FAVI- Visually Impaired
Tel. 582 5051
Alcoholics Anonymous
Tel. 736 2952
Narcotics Anonymous
Tel. 583 8989
Fundacion Contra Violencia
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Ex-regulator wants better protection for young adult gamblers, including uniform betting age

By **WAYNE PARRY**
Associated Press

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. (AP) —

New Jersey's former top gambling regulator with a nationwide reputation for strengthening oversight of the industry to make it safer says rules need to be toughened to protect young adults from developing addictions.

In recommendations that could become widely accepted around the country, David Rebutck, the recently retired director of New Jersey's Division of Gaming Enforcement, proposes a uniform age of 21 for all forms of gambling.

That includes buying lottery tickets and playing fantasy sports, which people as young as 18 can do in many places.

Several states allow 18-year-olds to gamble in casinos.

He also wants to prohibit arcade games that closely resemble casino games or slot machines, and more closely oversee daily fantasy sports games and regulate them as a form of gambling (New Jersey's current state regulations treat them as games of skill).

Rebutck was widely regard-



Gamblers play cards at the Ocean Casino Resort in Atlantic City N.J. on May 21, 2024.

Associated Press

ed as one of the most influential gambling regulators in America during his 13-year tenure, and his ideas were often emulated or adopted outright by gambling regulators in other states.

He said his recommendations, contained in an essay he released Thursday, are designed "to address what we all know will happen to some people" who gamble.

"People are going to slip into addiction," he said. "We all know that."

The goal is to limit that harm as much as possible, particularly for young adults, he said.

Keith Whyte, executive director of the National Council on Problem Gambling, said he strongly supports Rebutck's initiative.

"His deep experience and strong leadership as a regulator give him a great

perspective on the importance of addressing problem gambling and continuously modernizing the oversight of gambling in New Jersey and nationwide," Whyte said. "When Dave speaks, everyone should listen."

Mark Giannantonio, president of the Casino Association of New Jersey and of Atlantic City's Resorts casino, said the trade group will study Rebutck's recom-

mendations before offering feedback.

"Responsible gaming is essential to the success of the casino industry, and something we are all strongly committed to," he said.

Rebutck said New Jersey's gambling laws, most of which were written decades ago as safeguards against the influence of organized crime, need to be updated to keep pace with internet and phone-based gambling and rapidly evolving technology. And he called for an education campaign to teach the public that they are also engaging in gambling when they participate in sweepstakes, skill-based games, or use so-called "social gaming" apps.

He noted that New Jersey's Democratic governor, Phil Murphy, created a task force earlier this year to study gambling-related harm and seek corrective actions. They would need to be voted on by the state Legislature.

The most immediate change Rebutck proposes would be raising the minimum age to engage in any form of gambling to 21. □

Diners are skipping restaurants and making more meals at home as inflation trend inverts

By **DAMIAN J. TROISE**
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Eating in is in and eating out is out.

That's the message that inflation-squeezed consumers have been sending to fast-food companies and

other restaurants. Meanwhile food producers are benefitting from more palatable prices in grocery store aisles.

Inflation has been easing broadly for more than a year now, and it's been cooling faster for grocery items since the middle of the year. The current trend marks a reversal from previous years when grocery inflation outpaced restaurants as food producers raised prices, often fattening their profit margins.

The shift has been weighing on McDonald's, Olive Garden owner Darden Restaurants, and similar chains.

Orlando-based Darden reported a 1.1% sales drop

at restaurants open for at least a year. The decline was a more severe 2.9% at the Olive Garden chain. July was especially weak.

McDonald's reported a 1.1% drop for that same sales measure during its second quarter, compared with an 11.7% jump a year prior.

"You are seeing consumers being much more discretionary as they treat restaurants," said McDonald's CEO Christopher J. Kempczinski, in a call with analysts following the earnings report. "You're seeing that the consumer is eating at home more often. You're seeing more deal seeking from the consumer."

Both Darden and McDonald's are offering more bargains to entice cautious consumers. Olive Garden has brought back its "never ending pasta bowl," while McDonald's introduced its \$5 value meal deal.

Consumers have been focusing more on groceries and eating at home, and that's driving sales volumes for companies like General Mills, which makes Cheerios cereal, Progresso soups and Haagen-Dazs ice cream.

"We did anticipate that might be the case as we see consumers taking value," said General Mills CEO Jeffrey L. Harmening in a call with analysts. □



A woman checks prices as she shops at a grocery store in Wheeling, Ill., Friday, Jan. 19, 2024.

Associated Press

Coco Gauff and Carlos Alcaraz advance at the China Open

BEIJING (AP) — Coco Gauff reached the third round of the China Open by beating Clara Burel 7-5, 6-3 on Friday in her first match since the U.S. Open.

The No. 6-ranked Gauff, who saved a set point when trailing 5-4 in the first set, will play Katie Boulter of Britain, who advanced by beating American Taylor Townsend 6-4, 6-4.

Gauff is playing in Beijing following her recent split from coach Brad Gilbert after more than a year and one Grand Slam title together.

That break-up came shortly after Gauff's defense of the U.S. Open championship she won in 2023 ended in a fourth round loss against Emma Navarro.

Earlier, No. 3-ranked Carlos Alcaraz withstood a heavy barrage from big-serving Giovanni Mpetshi Perricard to win 6-4, 6-4 in his opening match.

Second-seeded Alcaraz took both of his break point opportunities, despite the No. 51-ranked Frenchman regularly sending down 140 mph (225 kph) serves.

Mpetshi Perricard won 83% of the points behind his first



Coco Gauff of the United States returns a shot from Clara Burel of France during the China Open tennis tournament held at the National Tennis Center in Beijing, Friday, Sept. 27, 2024.

Associated Press

serve but gave up costly errors at the beginning of each set, which Alcaraz was wily enough to capitalize on.

"The plan was just to put as many returns in as I can," Alcaraz said. "Honestly it wasn't easy. He's a really powerful player. Big serve, big shots from the baseline. So I had to be really focused."

Daniil Medvedev safely navigated a tricky first outing, 6-3, 6-4 against French veteran Gael Monfils.

Roman Safiullin, who made the main draw as a lucky loser in qualifying, beat three-time major winner Stan Wawrinka 6-3, 6-4 and will face top-ranked Jannik Sinner.

Sixth-seeded Lorenzo Musetti and seventh-seeded

Karen Khachanov also advanced.

In the women's draw, second-seeded Jessica Pegula opened her account by beating Diane Parry of France 6-1, 7-6 (4).

Pegula broke Parry's serve three times in a swift opening set. The second set saw both players trade breaks before the U.S. Open finalist won the final five points of

the tiebreak.

The American will next play No. 32 seed Veronika Kudermetova, who beat China's Wang Xinyu 3-6, 6-4, 7-5.

Four-time major winner Naomi Osaka rallied from a set down to beat Yulia Putintseva 3-6, 6-4, 6-2. Osaka will play American Katie Volynets in the third round. Sixth-seeded Emma Navarro was upset by Chinese wild card Zhang Shuai 6-4, 6-2, while 12th-seeded Diana Shnaider beat former Australian Open winner Sofia Kenin 6-2, 6-3.

U.S. Open champion Aryna Sabalenka plays on Saturday against Thai qualifier Mananchaya Sawangkaew.

Japan Open

Second-seeded Hubert Hurkacz lost to U.S. Open semifinalist Jack Draper 6-4, 6-4 in the second round in Tokyo, a day after top-seeded Taylor Fritz and third-seeded Casper Ruud were eliminated.

While Draper and Hurkacz were evenly matched on aces and winners, it was the Polish player's 30 unforced errors, to Draper's 20, that proved costly. □

Chicago Sky fire coach Teresa Weatherspoon after 1 season

CHICAGO (AP) — The Chicago Sky fired coach Teresa Weatherspoon after one season despite having two of the WNBA's most promising rookies.

The Sky confirmed the decision Friday, a day after two newspapers reported the move.

"After careful consideration, we have decided it is in the best interest of the organization to part ways with head coach Teresa Weatherspoon," Sky co-owner and operating chairman Nadi Rawlinson said in a statement. "We are deeply appreciative of Coach TSpoo's contributions to the Chicago Sky, and the energy and passion she brought to the head coaching role."

"We thank her for inspiring a competitive, resilient spirit across the team, synonymous with Chicago Sky

basketball."

Chicago finished 13-27 and missed the playoffs for the first time since 2018, even with significant contributions from rookie post players Angel Reese and Kamilla Cardoso. The next coach will be the team's fourth since the Sky won the WNBA championship in 2021.

Weatherspoon's firing could affect the future of Reese, who along with Indiana's Caitlin Clark helped draw record ratings and attendance figures after taking their rivalry from the colleges to the pros.

Reese expressed her support for Weatherspoon in a post on X, saying she was "heartbroken" and "lost for words." She called the coach "an unsung hero in my life" and added: "You didn't deserve this but I can't thank you enough.

I love you Tspoon. @Finisher_11."

Reese likely would have set the league record for rebounds in a season had she not missed Chicago's final six games because of a wrist injury. That didn't stop her from setting several other marks. She averaged a league-record 13.1 rebounds, and her 26 double-doubles were the most by a rookie. Reese and Weatherspoon also had a connection, having been coached by Kim Mulkey.

The Sky hired Naismith Hall of Famer Weatherspoon in mid-October 2023 after going 18-22 and losing in the first round of the playoffs. Former coach and general manager James Wade left in the middle of the season to take an assistant coaching job with the Toronto Raptors and was replaced on an interim basis by Emre

Vatansever.

A few weeks after hiring Weatherspoon, the Sky promoted Jeff Pagliocca to general manager. The new regime did what it could to put Chicago in position to get Cardoso and Reese.

In early February, the Sky

dealt 2021 Finals MVP Kahleah Copper to the Phoenix Mercury for four draft picks, including the No. 3 choice. They acquired the No. 8 pick from Los Angeles two weeks later and traded up a spot with Minnesota. □



Chicago Sky coach Teresa Weatherspoon calls out to players during the first half of the team's WNBA basketball game against the New York Liberty, May 23, 2024, in New York.

Associated Press

NFL is still a passing league despite early rise in running



Even though rushing yards are up and passing numbers are down over the first three weeks of the season, it's too soon to call it a new trend.

"It's still early with the sample size," Eagles coach Nick Sirianni said. "But it is something that we looked into because it is noticeable, and it is a really big dif

ference. But we'll continue to monitor that and what we are trying to do, though, is be efficient on offense. Hit your explosive plays. Take care of the football. Those things will never change. Not give up sacks."

NFL teams are averaging 119.5 yards rushing per game, up from 112.7 last season. But the league average was 121.6 yards per game in 2022. Teams actually aren't running more; they're just having more success. Average rushing attempts per team per game this season going into Week 4 is 26.9 vs. 26.8 last year.

Twenty players are on pace for 1,000-yard rushing seasons. Twelve players accomplished that feat in 2023, down from 16 in 2022. There were only seven in 2021, the first year the NFL went to 17 games in the regular season. Five teams are averaging 150 yards rushing per game and 13 are averaging 125. Only the Baltimore Ravens were above 150 in 2023 and nine teams averaged 125.

One reason why running backs are having better success is that more defenses are geared toward stopping the pass.

They use lighter, more athletic linebackers and play two-high

safeties. Offenses can be physical against those defensive sets and attack on the ground.

"You always try to keep defenses honest and they're doing the same thing back to you, so it's a little bit of a cat-and-mouse game on the number of people in the box," Chiefs coach Andy Reid said. "It's (the run game) been productive, so we've got good, positive yards from it."

Seventeen teams are averaging 200 yards passing per game, down from 22 last season. Ten teams are averaging 225, down from 16 last year. Only the Cowboys and 49ers are above 250 yards per game. Five teams reached that total last season.

Once defenses adjust and start to take away the run again, passing yards should increase.

"I do think that the sample size is small right now but there's been a shift," Titans coach Brian Callahan said of the run-pass ratio.

"I think statistically, as you look at it, teams are more intently running the football than maybe they were two years ago. So yeah, I think you're seeing a slight shift in process because it's hard to throw the ball all over the place against some of these defenses and how they play, and they make you earn it and they put a lot on the quarterback to be able to complete seven, eight balls a drive for six to nine drives a game. □

By **ROB MAADDI**
AP Pro Football Writer

The NFL isn't going back to old-school, smashmouth running football.

New Orleans Saints running back Alvin Kamara (41) before an NFL football game in New Orleans, Sunday, Sept. 22, 2024. The Eagles won 15-12.

Associated Press



The 2024 edition of the Caribbean Poker Series is returning to Aruba, taking place September 26th to October 6th, with US\$150,000 - guaranteed cash prizes.

Caribbean Series Poker is back in Aruba with a guaranteed prize of \$150,000

Following the success of the tournament in previous years, players are all set to enjoy the unique hospitality of the Casino Aruba. The upcoming tournament includes exciting rounds of poker almost around the clock, a tropical meet & greet pool-deck reception, and an awards evening.

Most of the tournament action during the 10 tournament days takes place in the Morris Lapidus Ballroom, in the lower lobby, where poker tables will be especially set up for participants, with more live poker waiting for them at the casino itself, in the Poker Room.

Among prizes for winners, 14 Rings and a Bracelet, to be awarded at a highly anticipated Main Event, at the end of the tournament. Poker enthusiasts are expected to show up from around the world, to take part in the exciting program. Competitive poker, relaxation, and island fun present an opportunity for visitors to make memories, showcase their poker skills, and experience the charm of the island.

For more updates and information, please visit www.tcaruba.com/pages/caribbean-poker-series-2024

The Poker Room at the casino is open from 7pm to 3am, offering No Limit Hold'em, Pot Limited Omaha & Tournaments. Live Table Games include Blackjack & Roulette, and Caribbean Stud Poker. The casino is open 11am to 3am, for slots, tables from 3pm to 3am, Monday to Sunday.

Players may apply for the casino membership card, it's FREE, and redeem points collected for prizes and surprises. The Casino at the Hilton Aruba Caribbean Resort & Casino, is affiliated to Liv Casino at the Barcelo Aruba, and under the management of Island Gaming NV.

The Hilton Aruba Caribbean Resort & Casino is undergoing annual enhancements including upgrade of the public spaces, the rooms, the restaurants, and a new Sunset Bar. □